The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. IX. BOSTON, DECEMBER, 1900. No. 7

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY: 50 cents a year. Single copy, 5 cents.

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second-class mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

GEORGE H. ELLIS, PRINTER, 272 CONGRESS ST., BOSTON.

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CHRISTMAS BELLS.

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.
—*Tennyson, In Memoriam.*

*A CHRISTMAS SERMON.**

"*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee.*"—LUKE i. 35.

Once a year, as this day approaches, the dawn of which is heralded by these streaks of light, the whole animus of life is apparently changed. By mutual consent the combatants lay aside their weapons; between the warring elements a truce is established; enemies think less bitterly of each other; friends more tenderly; asperities are softened; a mighty surge of kindliness comes swelling up, which bears away upon its generous brooding bosom all meaner things and floods the world with the glory of its Christmas-tide. Indeed, the whole end of life girdling the globe for these few fleeting days is transformed, and earth is touched with a semblance of that kingdom of heaven for which the weary centuries have watched and waited.

Not alone in our homes and city and state; not alone in this great republic; from pole to pole, from sea to sea, from continent to continent; in the wilderness, on barren plains, under torrid heat, in ice and storm, —how the heart of man is touched by the glory of this day! What a strange spell has seized the earth! what a transformation has been wrought! Does it not seem as though the Angel of the Annunciation again stood on earth, and said, not to Mary alone, but to the whole world, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee"?

*Several sentences and passages are used in this discourse without further acknowledgment.

Is not the dying year itself set in sacred, tender memories? Are we not overshadowed in this one golden era of the years by a fresh sense of the unwearied love, of the conscious power of the Most High? Are we not impelled to rise and look, and, as we gaze into the cradle of Jesus, to contemplate with larger eyes this incoming of the Holy Ghost, this perpetual miracle of birth, which gives to childhood and innocence the sceptre of mighty power and makes every home a sacred place upon which the shadow of the Most High has fallen?

He to whom has come the clearing, growing sense that in that birth was born that which is not of him,—God's child, not his; a lasting being separated from and independent of his own; a personality unrepeated, unparalleled, unearthly in its origin,—has passed from the blindness and death of sense into the limitless world of spirit, where the angels are ascending and descending; and at the manger of Christ he knows he stands where the shadow of the Most High has fallen.

This is the central lesson of the sacred nativity: God is the Father of souls. From the great central reservoir of Spirit our essential being came, and to the same we return in his time. I refer to no illusive dignity of human nature, for that is born of the earth and to the earth returns; but within each of us is the true Schekinah,—the soul, the stamp of the Holy Ghost, the shadow of the Almighty. From this central truth look along the years. In the long run of the centuries how true are the instincts of the race! What work was wrought by the fact of the birth of Christ, confirming the validity of this great lesson which I would so impress upon you to-day!

This,—from that hour maternity and childhood, innocence and purity, became sacred as the symbols of Divinity, were recognized as the manifest shadows of the Most High.

No word of mine, brethren, can picture the influence upon human history of the Mother and her Child from that hour. To realize the full scope of this fact, you must know the low estimate in which womanhood, maternity, and helplessness were held by the whole world; that brute force was the sole king,—the only hero, he of brawn and muscle and physical power. Women were but the necessary links of the generations; childhood lived on sufferance; weakness was the synonym of contempt.

Let him who doubts the mighty verities of the gospel stand by the cradle of Christ and witness the miracle of transformation. The reign of brute force ended; the mailed warrior reverencing maternity; the mighty arm of the hero consecrated to the defence of weakness, the Holy Child,—the shadow of the Most High, the inspiration of self-sacrifice and chivalry and manhood; the family supplanting the citadel and the fortress as the rallying-point of a new lasting Christian civilization.

We need such a day as this, brethren. Make much of it with your children. If you have no children, make much of it for those who have no parents. Get back in some way to where the shadow of God lies tender and restful and brooding over that cradle, so that even for a day your pulse may beat in unison with this great heart-throb of kindliness that fills the earth with joy, that binds land to land, that blunts the keen edge of enmity, that tinges the face of age with the light of eternal youth. Then this Christmas Day will fall like an unspoken benediction. Then the glory that succeeds this wondrous birth will unfold. Then, with the enraptured vision of that ancient prophet, you will join the mighty host, if only for a day,—the mighty host in which with peace on earth, the wolf walks alongside of the lamb, the leopard with the kid, the calf, the young lion, and the fatling together; for a little child shall lead them all on, up, nearer to God, the father of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

"O Christmas stars! Your pregnant silentness,
Mute syllabled in rhythmic light,
Fills all the night.
No doubt on all your golden shores
Full music rings
Of happiness
As sweet as ours.
Midway in that great tideless stream which pours,
And builds its shining road through trackless space
From you to us, and us to you, must be
Some mystic place
Where all our voices meet and melt
Into this solemn silence which is felt,
And sense of sound mysterious brings
Where sound is not. This is God's secret. He

Sits centred in his myriads of skies,
Where seas of sound and seas of silence rise,
And break together in one note and key,
Divinely limitless in harmony!"

And unto his great name be honor and glory, dominion and power, world without end, now and forevermore. Amen.

—*Charles R. Weld.*

THE STILL HOUR.

"AND THERE WERE SHEPHERDS."

Over the long green downs, when I do wander
After the ewes and lambs, so oft I ponder,
When the Chief Shepherd comes, that is full tender,
He will, of all His own, true reckoning render;
Them that give suck and feed, them from dust raisèd;
Praise the good Lord, therefore.
The Lord be praisèd.

When 'tis a darksome night, and deep snow drifteth,
When many lambs are lost ere the storm lifteth,
I think, "When Thou shalt come, though the dark blind me,
Lord, 'twill be light to Thee, straight Thou wilt find me;
I, when Thou call'st my soul, with light amazèd
Shall in Thy light see light."
The Lord be praisèd.

Oft as the day comes round, this drear December,
How shepherds sat of old, still I remember,
And Thou didst send them news, straight from Thy city,
All of Thy great good will and Thy dear pity;
Glad were the shepherds then with glory dazèd;
Praise the good Lord, therefore.
The Lord be praisèd.

—*Jean Ingelow, Holy Songs.*

PEACE ON EARTH.

Peace, peace on earth! the heart of man forever
Through all these weary strifes foretells the day;
Blessed be God, the hope forsakes him never,
That war shall end and swords be sheathed for aye.

Peace, peace on earth! for men shall love each other,
Hosts shall go forth to bless and not destroy;
For man shall see in every man a brother,
And peace on earth fulfil the angels' joy.

—*S. Longfellow.*

Listen! the last strip of cloud has floated down under the horizon. The stars burn brightly in the cold air. The night wind, sighing over the pastoral slopes, falls suddenly, floats by, and carries its murmuring train out of hearing. The heaven of the angels opens for one glad moment, and the midnight skies are overflowed with melody, so beautiful that it ravishes the hearts of those who hear, and yet so soft that it troubles not the light slumbers of the restless sheep.—*Faber.*

While Easter gives hope of an immortal life, Christmas brings to us the hope of a better life in this world.

Every good gift is from above. But, as the year brings round this Christmas season, we can rejoice that God sent, in the fulness of time, that eldest Son, our elder brother, who has gifts for all mankind.

The star of the magi still stands over every cradle. The angel song is heard in the heart of every parent. Christmas makes an aureole of heavenly light around all the infants in Christian lands.

Christmas is a presage of the time when wars shall cease; when the whole Church shall be one; when the Christ of love and truth shall be everywhere accepted, obeyed, and loved, and the knowledge of God shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.

We rejoice in Christ's hope for mankind; we are happy in his brotherly love; we are led by him to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God; we join in the angel's song, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will to men.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.*]

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 373 *Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.?*

The following books are offered by the Cambridge Branch. Address Mrs. C. W. Kettell, 19 Brewster Street, Cambridge, Mass. Old correspondents will please ad-

dress the members to whom they have formerly written. In order to receive books from the Cambridge Branch, it will be necessary henceforth to send a reference with the first request.

Educational.

Phillips's "History Readers," Parts 1, 2, 3; Wells's "First Principles of Geology"; Chittenden's "English Composition"; Webster's Dictionary; "Outlines of Physical Geography," Fitch; "Elementary Geography," "Physical Geography," Maurey; "Physical Geography," Houston; "Physical Geography," Monteith; Ellis's "Primary History of the United States"; "English History for American Readers"; "First Book in American History"; "Elementary Lessons in Physics"; Frye's "Complete Geography"; "Two Years with Numbers"; "Lessons on Gradation"; "The Morse Speller"; "The Children's Reader"; "Children's Second Reader"; "Arithmetic by Grades, I."; "Graded Lessons in English"; Tarbell's "Lessons in Language"; "Grammar School Arithmetic."

Musical.

"Normal Music Course, First Reader"; "First Music Reader"; "American School Music Reader"; "Gems for Little Singers"; "The Charm"; "Pure Diamonds"; "Children's Sunday-school Songs"; Conconne's "Lessons"; "Vocal and Physical Training."

Miscellaneous.

"Typical Tales from Shakespeare"; Gray's "Poems"; "Sidney," Mrs. Deland; "A Saint," Paul Bourget; "Old Mortality"; "Rachel Stanwood"; Æsop's "Fables"; "Life of Lady Jane Grey"; "Religious Progress," A. V. G. Allen; Dickens's "Christmas Carol"; Dewey's "Autobiography and Letters"; "Anecdote Biography of Thackeray and Dickens"; Irving's Life of Columbus; Hawthorne's "Tales of the White Hills"; *Southern Workman for* 1900.

The Second Church Branch of the Women's Alliance offers the following books and magazines. Address Miss Decker, 4 Mt. Vernon Street, Salem, Mass.

"Canterbury Tales," Harriet Lee; "Light of Asia," Sir Edwin Arnold; "A Hardy Norseman," Edna Lyall; "Gretchen's Joys and Sorrows"; "Coitlan," A. W. Hancock; "Rose Mather"; "Against the Grain," James; "A Romance of the Wise," Edwards; "Altiora Peto," Laurence Oliphant; "The Shorter Life of D. L. Moody"; *The Household* from September, 1899, through January, 1900, inclusive; the *Cosmopolitan*, 1893, 1895–98; *Frank Leslie*, 1882–84,—a few numbers missing from the last two publications; "Sunday-school Service and Hymn Book," Rev. H. G. Spaulding, 39 books, in poor condition,—published in 1887; "Hymn, Tune, and Service Book for the Sunday-school," 56 books, published in 1869; "Social Hymns and Tunes," 16 books published in 1872; "Hymn and Tune Book for Church and Home," 50 books, published in 1868; leaflets abridged from same, about two dozen; "Book of Common Prayer," arranged for King's Chapel, Boston, 1850, 10 books.

The Brighton Branch offer the following books. Address Miss Carrie L. Murdock, Brighton, Mass.

"The Christian," Hall Caine; "What's Mine's Mine," George MacDonald; "Soldiers of Fortune," Richard Harding Davis; "Three Men in a Boat," Jerome K. Jerome; "The Stickit Minister," S. R. Crockett; "A Change of Air," Anthony Hope; "All in a Garden Fair," Walter Besant; "In Old New England," Hezekiah Butterworth; "In His Steps," C. M. Sheldon; "Treasure Island," Robert Louis Stevenson; "Doctor Latimer," Clara Louise Burnham; "Knight Errant," Edna Lyall; "Robert Elsmere," Mrs. Humphry Ward; "Uncle Max," "Heriot's Choice," Rosa N. Carey; "The Heart of Virginia," J. Perkins Tracy; "An Enemy to the King," Robert Nelson Stevens; "The Wrestler of Philippi" (a tale of the early Christians), Fannie E. Newberry; "The Scourge of God" (persecution of the Huguenots, time of Louis XIV.), John Bloundelle-Burton.

Magazines.

Munsey's, 1896–98; *McClure's*, 1896–98; *Strand*, 1900 (8 numbers); *Review of Reviews*, 1898–99; *Century*, 1894–98.

A Bible suitable for a Sunday-school is offered by Mrs. A. B. Denny, Chestnut Hill, Mass.

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by

noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

I am a widow, and take great interest in reading, but have to weave carpets to help make a living, so am not able to buy books. I would like very much to have "Ben-Hur," Gray's "Anatomy," Halliburton's "Physiology," and *Harper's Magazine* on the late war or some other periodicals of your own selection. I will be very thankful for what you send. Banna E. Michener, Chester Hill, Morgan County, Ohio.

The post-office at this place has been closed because the colony had all moved away, except the postmistress and my husband and myself. Empty houses and deserted plantations are all that remain of Pabor Lake. We now get our mail at Avon Park, a little settlement of Northerners about four miles from us. The ruin was caused by land-sharks,—a "boom" to get rich quickly by pineapple culture. The frosts killed pineapples, the soil proved barren, even with a liberal use of fertilizers; and deeds to land were worthless. The result was hundreds were financially ruined, ourselves among the number, and the abandonment of the section. I am an almost helpless cripple, with every joint more or less swelled, enlarged, twisted, and drawn out of place. Until the last few months, I carried on quite a large correspondence with shut-ins and members of Cheerful Letter Club, but now have become too ill and too painfully crippled in hands and arms to write much. I have "passed on" to Exchange members nearly all that has been sent me. I am now more than ever dependent upon reading to keep my mind from my terrible pain. My husband and I are all alone here in the woods. No one ever passes. We see no one for days at a time, only as our friends drive over from the next town. If it were not for reading, I should go insane with the dreary loneliness, as I have always been accustomed to city life, having spent most of my life in Chicago. Please remember my change of address to Avon Park, Florida. Mrs. E. A. J. Godell.

I have had three books through your agency. Since I have sincerely thanked the senders, I ask you to accept all the thanks it is possible to conceive. How much we all enjoyed "Samantha among the Brethren"! and now another family enjoys it. I should like so much to have "Miss Belladonna; or, A Child of To-day," by Caroline Ticknor, for myself. I want "Samantha at the Centennial" for my sister. In fact, the whole family as well as my friends will enjoy it. I am anxious for "Paul and Virginia" for my little brother. God must have directed a kind friend to inform me of you good *Cheerful Letter* people. I am a devout lover of good books and papers. Miss Mattie E. Sale, Dellaplane, North Carolina.

Mrs. Ennis Pegram, Dellaplane, North Carolina, would be glad to receive "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Robinson Crusoe," or "Six Little Rebels."

Mrs. J. J. Otis, Pasadena, Texas, would be glad to receive "David Harum," "Richard Carvel," "To Have and to Hold," "When Knighthood was in Flower," or "In Connection with the Willoughby Claim."

Mrs. Estella Willis, Huntley, Harlan County, Nebraska, an invalid confined to her bed, asks for any reading.

Katie Scarbrough, Athens, Texas, thanks the cheerful friends for reading sent, and asks that more be sent her, also to her sister, Verna Scarbrough of Palestine, Texas.

Mrs. Mary Brown, Dellaplane, North Carolina, asks for "Lorna Doone," "Wee Wifie," or "Romola."

Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—I wish to thank you all again for your kindness to me in the past. My health has been very poor for the past two years, but I am still trying to do what I can for the children of my neighborhood. I want to have a Xmas tree for them again; for I know they are ex-

pecting it, and I do not want to have them disappointed. Anything sent me will be thankfully received and put to the best possible use. Papers, books, cards, magazines, anything that will please children, will be received with gratitude. We have a nice Sunday-school, and are trying to have a day-school; but the attendance is very small. Mrs. J. Porter, Parkerville, Worth County, Georgia.

Rev. John W. Brown, Peakhill, North Carolina, asks for "Pillar of Fire," "Throne of David," and a pocket Bible.

"Christian Stewardship" or any good reading is asked for by Mrs. H. A. Hardigoll, Statham, Georgia.

I am a public school teacher; but my expenses are very heavy, and I am dependent on myself for everything. I read Mrs. C. W. Kettell's offer; and I have just written, asking her to send me a book. I would be glad to receive some good books and magazines. I haven't any books to offer, or I would gladly do so; for I am glad to let others enjoy books that I have read. I am very fond of reading, and will be thankful for any books or reading matter that I may receive. I would like very much to receive "David Copperfield" and "Christmas Stories," by Charles Dickens, or "Rob Roy," "Guy Mannering," and "The Bride of Lammermoor," by Walter Scott. Address (Miss) Carrie D. Phillips, Pleasant View, Amherst County, Virginia.

Mrs. L. M. Booth, 2647 Anita Street, Los Angeles, California, a shut-in, asks for "Pilgrim's Progress" and Longfellow's or Lowell's poems.

Harrington's Spelling-book, an Arithmetic, Second and Third Readers, are very much desired by Mrs. Eliza Hill, Andersonville, North Carolina.

I have received the book "Stepping Heavenward." Many thanks for the same; will pass it on. Would recommend Mrs. T. E. Lamb, Hunter, Wash., to the kindness of the Cheerful Letter friends. She lives far from church: they never see a minister or go to church. She has a large family of eight children. Any reading for the young would be gratefully received. Thanking the good friends of *The Cheerful Letter* for past favors, and hope they will not forget me in the future, as my life is very lonely now that I am left a widow. Mrs. Hannah Phas, Larene, Wash.

I would so much like some of Mrs. Southworth's novels, Mrs. May Agnes Fleming, Mrs. Henry Wood, or "Marguerite," "Cousin Maude," Edith Lyle, "Mildred," or "Cameron Pride," by Mrs. M. J. Holmes, as I have read some of her novels, and like them so very much. Or I would so much like *The Housekeeper* for 1900, after it has been read, or any good story paper. Ida Worden, Bentonsport, Iowa, would like *Youth's Companion*, 1900, after being read, or *Harper's Bazar* or fashion paper. Can any one send novels by any of the following to the address of H. J. Quaintance, Bentonsport, Iowa,— Mrs. Oliphant, Miss Mulock, or Florence Marryat? Any of the above will be so thankfully received. Mrs. M. Spellman, Bentonsport, Iowa.

A work on astronomy, botany, or geology, would be most welcome. Mrs. Eva Beach, Flora Vista, New Mexico.

Dear Cheerful Letter People,—Will you let me thank you for your past kindness to me? I am quite sure there is no one who can appreciate any kindness as much as an invalid, especially one who is poor in this world's goods and has to be a "shut-in" for years. Such has been my lot for seventeen years. I love the dear little *Cheerful Letter*. I always wish after reading it there was more to it. I am only an *adopted mother*, yet I am greatly interested in "The Mothers' Council." The books, magazines, and papers that have been sent to me have been a blessed comfort to me. They have helped me to bear my sufferings, and helped me to forget so many sorrows that have come to me. I wish to thank particularly Mary L. Clark of Cambridge, Mass., Miss Lora Weis of Dorchester, Mass., and Mrs. L. T. Sturtevant of Quincy, Mass., for good letters and reading. May God bless you all for your kindness to me! Mrs. J. L. Bergh, Cobleskill, New York.

[Do you not feel like writing a note occasionally to "The Mothers' Council"? Suggestions, criticisms, and narratives of personal experiences would be most helpful to our readers.]

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

[Contributions to this department are most welcome, and may be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.

A LETTER.

I think every one is interested in all that "H. H." writes about children. Her genuine sympathy for children, her charming style of writing, and the really valuable counsel which she sometimes gives make us glad to read anything of hers, and wish that she had written a great deal more on this subject. I have always liked especially the little story of "A Polite Mother" (I forget whether that is the title, but it is a descriptive title), and also the painful story of the little "Blue Eyes" whose mother, really an affectionate, well-meaning woman, did so much injustice and caused so much suffering simply by not being able to put herself in the child's place.

The story told in the August number of *The Cheerful Letter* has, however, always seemed to me to need a good deal of salt. I read it many years ago, when it first came out, and with great surprise. I had never known a case of an "oppressed" boy, not one. I wondered whether it was because my own circle differed in some way from Mrs. Hunt's or whether I had failed to notice the same phenomena. My attention being drawn to the matter by her pathetic appeal on behalf of this class of sufferers, I have since been on the watch to observe such instances of parental injustice. I am still waiting for the first case.

Mrs. Hunt seems actually to believe that it is the usual thing for parents to pet and spoil girls and treat boys with harshness. All my observations lead me to a directly opposite conclusion. The danger seems to me to be all on the other side. Boys, at least in many families, are allowed to be selfish, disrespectful, and domineering, ruthlessly tyrannizing over their sisters, and behaving to their mother in such an insolent manner that a visitor longs to take them by the shoulders and put them out of the room. I remember seeing an ill-tempered boy of ten, roughly shake a little sister, six years younger, without any provocation (for I was in the room, and saw the whole affair); and the mother helplessly drawled out: "Don't do that, dear. You know Nellie isn't used to playing with boys!" "Well, she's got to *get* used to it!" announced the young sultan, viciously.

In many a family great unhappiness is caused by the irritable temper of the husband and father, which can be directly traced to the weak indulgence of his parents. In childhood the habit was formed of venting his ill-humor on his sisters, who were told "not to mind it." Now the wife and children suffer because the head of the family, often a man of good character in other respects, was not in his youth taught self-control.

I wish that we might have some letters on this subject, based on personal observation. If twenty people who have really noticed the tendency of the age in this respect would write each a short letter, narrating some incident which has come under their own eyes, it would be very interesting. It would be especially interesting to me, because I have a real desire to know whether the experience of others is in the line of Mrs. Hunt's or of my own.

No doubt there would be some anecdotes similar to hers; but, if we have twenty responses, there would be a preponderance of testimony on one side or the other.

L. F. C.

SIMPLE LIFE BEST.

Happiness is the natural condition of every normal child; and, if the small boy or girl has a peculiar facility for any one thing, it is for self-entertainment, with certain granted conditions, of course. One of these is physical freedom and a few rude and simple playthings. Agreeable occupation is as great a necessity for children as for adults, and beyond this almost nothing can be contributed to the real happiness of a child.

"I try hard to make my children happy," said a mother with a sigh, one day, in despair at her efforts.

"Stop trying," exclaimed a practical friend at her elbow, "and do as a neighbor of mine does."

"And how is that?" she asked dolefully.

"Why, she simply lets her children grow and develop naturally, only directing their growth properly. She has always thrown them, as far as practicable, upon their own resources, taught them to wait upon themselves,—no matter how many servants she

had,—and to construct their own playthings. When she returns home from an absence, they await but one thing,—their mother's kiss. Whatever has been brought for them is bestowed when the needed time comes. Nothing exciting is allowed to them at night, and they go to bed and to sleep in a wholesome mental state that insures rest and slumber. They are taught to love nature, and to feel that there is nothing arrayed so finely as the lily of the field, the bees, and the butterflies; there is nothing so mean as a lie, nor anything so miserable as disobedience; that it is a disgrace to be sick; and that good health, good teeth, and good temper come from plain food, plenty of sleep, and being good."

In order to thrive, children require a certain amount of "letting alone." Supreme faith in the mother, few toys, no finery, plain food, no drugs, and early to bed, are the best things for making them happy.—*The Quiver.*

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR.

WE GO TO PARIS AND SEE THE FRENCH EXPOSITION.

The first time I ever went abroad, I landed in France; and the first foreign town I saw was Rouen. We stepped, as it were, from New York into Rouen; for the steamer does not count. (It was the worst passage I ever had, and was like a nightmare dream.) As on the present journey Manchester was the last town we visited in England, it seemed the best way to cross from Southampton to Havre, and by that route we should pass through Rouen; and Undine could add another to her tale of cathedrals. The only objection is that you have to go by night: there is no other way. The steamer sails at midnight every twenty-four hours; but you are allowed to go on board at ten. We wanted a little more time in Southampton,—for it seems that the Pilgrims met the "Mayflower" there; but you want a little more time everywhere. The passage was perfectly smooth, and we slept all night.

I looked eagerly to see what changes there might be in Rouen. Tram-cars do destroy some of the atmosphere of antiquity in all the old cities. But, when inside of a cathedral, we seem to go back five hundred years. Still, one needs a little time and imagination to call up Rollo of Normandy, Richard the Fearless (Miss Yonge's "Little Duke"), and one who to some of us seems the most romantic character in history,—Joan of Arc. Here stands her statue in the Place de la Pucelle. Here is the old gray tower where the innocent child languished all those dreary months; here the spot where that cruel tragedy took place, and the white soul winged its way to heaven.

Here blooms the legend, fed by Time and Chance,
Fresh as the morning, though in centuries old;
The whitest lily on the shield of France
With heart of virgin gold.

Along this square she moved,—sweet Joan of Arc;
With face more pallid than a day-lit star,—
Unseen,—half doubted; while before her, dark
Stretched the array of war.

Swift curled the battle-smoke of lying breath
From off her path, as if a wind had blown;
Showing no faithless king, but righteous death—
On the low wooden throne.

He would reward her. She who meekly wore
Alike the gilded mail and peasant gown
As meekly now received one honor more,—
The formless, fiery crown.

A white dove trembled up the heated air, *
And in the opening zenith found its goal;
Soft as a downward feather dropped a prayer
For each repentant soul. †

Travellers are now admitted to the old gray tower where Joan of Arc was imprisoned, and shown her cell. But this is almost too painful. There are tragedies going on now, in the world, which are almost too much for us to bear; and, as, the cruelties perpetrated in the Middle Ages were over hundreds of years ago, we would rather think of all that is bright and beautiful in Joan of Arc's life,—of her purity, innocence, high courage, and the faith and hope that made "all things possible." A friend of mine once said that on Joan of Arc's monument these words might well have found a place:—

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*Some of those present at the execution of Joan of Arc thought that they saw a white dove fly upward toward heaven from the scaffold.

†Mrs. James Russell Lowell is the author of this lovely little poem.

"Who, through faith, subdued kingdoms; wrought righteousness; obtained promises; stopped the mouths of lions; quenched the violence of fire; escaped the edge of the sword; out of weakness were made strong; waxed valiant in fight; turned to flight the armies of the aliens." "Of whom the world was not worthy."

We left old, gray, antique Rouen, with all its thrilling and touching and tragic and radiant memories and associations, and went onward to bright, modern Paris.

I have a home in Paris. A little room, with a large window opening from the ceiling to the floor on a little balcony, where the sun pours in in the morning, and where (quite contrary to New England customs) the mountain (in the shape of breakfast) comes to Mahomet instead of Mahomet having to come to the mountain. I get up when I feel like it, in Paris; and my New England conscience says nothing when I take an extra nap.

If I had been alone, I should have spent nearly all my time going to the Exposition; but, as Undine had never been in Paris, it seemed desirable that her first impressions should be of the right kind. She herself was more interested in Paris than in the Exposition. This showed good judgment, I suppose; but, on the other hand, Paris will not run away, and the Exposition will, or, at least, it will come to an end. However, Paris is not like other cities. It seems as if it *might* come to an end at any minute. I remember a young girl (much snubbed by a member of the travelling firm to which she belonged, as one of those foolish people who "want to see a technical sight every day"), — well, this pertinacious young woman would go out and see St. Cloud, although admonished that she "would, no doubt, come back and see everything some other time, so it wasn't worth while now." Less than a year after, the Franco-Prussian War broke out. St. Cloud and the Tuileries were burned. Remembering this warning experience, quite as much a moral tale as any of Miss Edgeworth's, it seems best, in view of the taste of the French for revolutions, etc., to see Paris, while you are in Paris, and not relegate your sight-seeing to an uncertain future.

We had, however, to plan pretty carefully; for it is no easy thing to see both Paris and the Exposition at one and the same time. Like Frank and Mary, we made a list of "*must*-haves" and "*may*-wants."

We intended to take two out-of-town excursions,— to Versailles and to St. Denys. The other *must*-haves were: Notre Dame and the Sainte Chapelle, the Conciergerie, the Louvre, the Cluny. Then came the Musée Carnavalet, the Bois de Boulogne, and the Jardin d'Acclimatisation, St. Germain en Laye (if we had a chance for a third excursion), and any churches that could be thrown in.

The very first of all was Notre Dame and the Sainte Chapelle,— Undine likes cathedrals,— and it is always a pleasant, peaceful thing to do, to see a cathedral; while the Sainte Chapelle is so near that I always count these two as one sight. The Sainte Chapelle, with its old historical associations with Louis IX., the Saint, has a peculiar charm. The notices put up in Notre Dame certainly carry us back to mediæval times. I once saw an offer of prayers for souls in purgatory (at so much apiece. *Whole families* would be prayed for at commutation rates). Boxes for offerings were everywhere. I succeeded in finding one "for the sick poor," in which to drop a penny. The pope and most of the other objects did not attract me.

The next day we saw the Conciergerie, which is one of the few sights that *really* carry us back to the time of the Revolution. The Bastille is gone. The "Temple" where the unhappy royal family were confined is gone. Even the Palace of the Tuileries is now gone, but the Conciergerie remains. This very floor, of damp, cold stone, is the one pressed by Marie Antoinette's feet. This very window gave her the same dim light. From here she went out to the guillotine.

I wonder why people do not all learn a little French before travelling in Europe? We met so many who did not know a word, apparently, and were sometimes really inconvenienced by this. On the occasion of our visiting the Conciergerie, the guide took us through several rooms before we arrived at the prison, and gave us information about them as we went. An intelligent-looking young man, an American, said to me, "Did he say that Marie An-

toinette dined in this room?" "No," said I, "the *servants* of Louis IX." And at St. Denys, in the crypt of the church, we were all instructed to mount in turn a step, and gaze through an opening into a central mausoleum, where were buried many royal personages. One lady, descending, said to me: "I have not the *least idea* what I have been looking at. What *is* in there?" The guide had explained very fully; and, fortunately, I could tell her most of the people whose names he mentioned.

St. Denys is a regular country town, although so near Paris. We went by rail, in an odd little parlor car. On the way, I became acquainted with a young Frenchman, a soldier. My window was open, and it began to rain in upon me. The young Frenchman sprang to my rescue, and closed it. I said, "Thank you." He regarded the incident as an introduction, and immediately began to converse.

The French are very different from the English in this respect. The English do not like to talk. A Frenchman would rather talk to his umbrella than not talk at all. It is true that we have met not infrequently an Englishman who talks, and talks well; but it is an acquired taste, like eating olives. When an Englishman does talk, he talks about Civil Service Reform, American Politics, the Chinese Crisis, the Transvaal War; and one whom we met later in the summer discoursed on the language of the North American Indians. If an Englishman does talk, you may be pretty sure he is a gentleman and a scholar, a professor in a college or a bishop, or a holder of foreign office at home on a vacation. But a Frenchman talks about anything or nothing, and Frenchmen of all classes talk. On this occasion the young soldier began in the most cheerful manner:—

"What frightful weather! First it rains. Then it snows. Then it hails. Weather *positively* injurious to the health!" And so on for five minutes.

When we arrived, he seized the opportunity to give us a great deal of information about how to get to the church. It seems we had made a mistake to come by rail. We were a mile and a half away from the church, and *no* conveyance from the station at all. The right way to go is to take a tram-car from the Place de la Madeleine. But all this gave a chance for more conversation.

It is a worthy foreign custom to pay much more attention to aunts and mothers than to nieces and daughters. But, of course, in France a strange young man *cannot* speak to a young girl. Still, I am not sure that I do not owe some of the attentions I have received to the fact of my carrying about with me a *jeune fille Américaine*, with blue eyes, fair hair, and a complexion like apple-blossom petals.

After getting rid of the young soldier, we fell in with a girl of seventeen or eighteen, in a little muslin cap. She was only too delighted to show us the way, since it gave *her* a chance to chatter to us for about ten minutes.

I had all my life wanted to see St. Denys, —the cathedral, I mean; and now my wish was fulfilled. But, like most long-deferred pleasures, it gave me a melancholy feeling to be actually on the spot. It is as antique as the heart of a traveller can desire, with monuments to Dagobert I. (638) and St. Fredegonde (earlier still). From Dagobert to Louis XV. the French kings were buried here. But in the French Revolution their bones were dragged out, and cast into the common pit. It was a curious coincidence that this happened on the very anniversary of the day when Louis XIV. had "caused the demolition of the tombs of the German emperors at Spires." (What made him do that?) "In 1817 Louis XVIII. caused the remains of his ancestors, as well as those of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette (who had been buried in the churchyard of the Madeleine), to be replaced in the crypt." (I wonder how he sorted them out? Perhaps they were all in one spot.) He succeeded in burying his nephew here (the assassinated Duc de Berri), and the two little children of the same. But these were the last of the Bourbons to find a resting-place in St. Denys.

Napoleon III. prepared a fine tomb for his family in the crypt, and there it stands quite empty.

All sorts of interesting things happened at St. Denys; and it is necessary to look at the guide-book beforehand, else you would be in danger of failing to dilate with some very important emotion. Here

were anointed the two sons of Pepin the Little, Charles and Charlemagne. Louis VI. adopted the oriflamme, or standard, of St. Denys as the banner of the kings of France, and hung it above the altar. Here it remained until the battle of Agincourt, when the English seem to have torn it down. Abelard lived in the abbey of St. Denys until made abbot of Paraclete. Joan of Arc hung up her arms here. Henri IV. abjured Protestantism here. Finally, Napoleon was here married to Marie Louise.

I never had any enthusiasm for Napoleon nor for Marie Louise; and, as my emotions were pretty well exhausted, I thought myself justified in omitting to dilate about them.

We came back to Paris on the top of a tram-car. This was to please Undine, who wanted to study the manners and customs of the country. The manners are—to smoke in your face; and customs—to spit on the floor.

However, the worst people got out pretty soon; and the rest of the ride was quite pleasant. We descended at the Madeleine, and it was not too late to go inside for half an hour. A service was going on. There is almost always a service in a Roman Catholic church; and this was a pleasant ending to our day.

L. F. C.

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Please send all material for this department to Miss E. D. Chapman, 34 Buckingham Street, Cambridge, Mass.]

Charades.

1.

As my *first* roams over the fertile fields,
Golden with ripened grain,
My *second* and *third* are seen at a glance
In the teamster's busy train.

When winter has covered the sleeping earth
With her mantle warm and white,
My *whole* oft greets our wondering eyes,
The miracle of a night.

E. P. P.

2.

My *first* is evil spurned by the elect.
My *last* a prophet is, whom all respect.
My *whole*, straightforward, honest, and direct.

E. P. P.

Links in a Chain.

1.

Change a *cent* into a *dime* by changing one letter at a time, and not transposing the order. Example,— cent, dent, dint, dine, dime. This is done by three links, as is easily seen.

2.

Change *star* to *moon* in four links, *eyes* to *nose* in five, *page* to *book* in five. Make *bread* into *toast* in six, make the *sick well* in three, get *coal* from a *mine* in five links.

The Christmas Tree.

On it were found the following articles. 1. Lungs. 2. A mineral and to cheat. 3. An explosive sound and a vegetable. 4. A noted actor. 5. An exclamation and something found in kitchens. 6. A cape. 7. A festivity. 8. A bird. 9. Two little French words. 10. A stupid fellow. 11. Part of the body and to fasten. 12. Enemy, part of the body and a German count. 13. A town in France, and to fasten. 14. To guard. 15. A support and to allow.

Answers to Puzzles in November Number.

Charades.

1. Pumpkins. 2. Seasons.

Conundrums.

1. Mushroom. 2. They raised Cain. 3. One pours with rain, the other roars with pain. 4. He takes an E-lix-ir (and he licks her). 5. He's above doing a mean action. 6. When there is a Canon in the reading-desk, a great gun in the pulpit. When the bishop is charging the clergy, the choir is murdering the anthem, and the organist is trying to drown the choir.

Mangled Verses.

See what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairily well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design!

Tennyson.

Cross-words.

1. Palm — Date. 2. Rose — hips.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, January 4, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. All interested in this work are cordially invited to be present.

Please notice that the address of the secretary has been changed from 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, to 373 Boylston Street, Boston.

News has been received of the death of Miss Alma Woodson of Sandidges, North Carolina.

Miss Winifred Bridge, Dade City, Florida, asks for the following books: Field's "History," Radway's "Geography," and Milnes's "Arithmetic." Miss Bridge expects to graduate this year, and then to become a teacher next year.

Mr. C. Milner, Millersburg, Indiana, would like to receive some sociological literature.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged — not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort — by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,— good citizens of the country, for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

UNENDING.

There is an end to kisses and to sighs,
  There is an end to laughter and to tears,
An end to fair things that delight our eyes,
  An end to pleasant sounds that charm our ears,
An end to enmity's foul libelling
  And to the gracious praise of tender friend:
There is an end to all but one sweet thing,—
  To love there is no end.

That warrior carved an empire with his sword,
  The empire now is but, like him, a name;
That statesman spoke, and by a burning word
  Kindled a nation's heart into a flame:
Now naught is left but ashes, and we bring
  Our homage to new men; to them we bend.
There is an end to all but one sweet thing,—
  To love there is no end.

All beauty fades away, or else, alas!
  Men's eyes grow dim, and they no beauty see;
The glorious shows of nature pass and pass,—
  Quickly they come, as quickly do they flee;
And he who hears the voice of welcoming
  Hears next the slow, sad farewell of his friend.
There is an end to all but one sweet thing,—
  To love there is no end.

—*All the Year Round.*

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR,—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 373 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.